

(12) INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(19) World Intellectual Property Organization
International Bureau



(43) International Publication Date
31 May 2001 (31.05.2001)

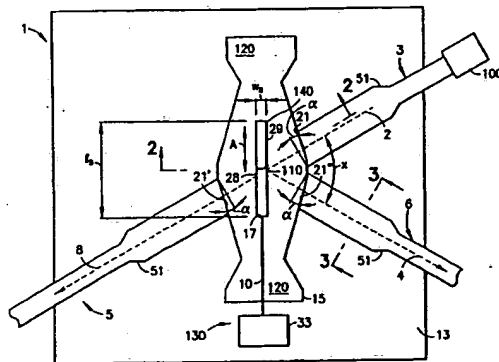
PCT

(10) International Publication Number
WO 01/38921 A3

- (51) International Patent Classification⁷: G02B 26/08
- (21) International Application Number: PCT/US00/32366
- (22) International Filing Date:
22 November 2000 (22.11.2000)
- (25) Filing Language: English
- (26) Publication Language: English
- (30) Priority Data:
60/167,142 23 November 1999 (23.11.1999) US
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- (81) Designated States (*national*): AE, AL, AM, AT, AU, AZ, BA, BB, BG, BR, BY, CA, CH, CN, CU, CZ, DE, DK, EE, ES, FI, GB, GD, GE, GH, GM, HR, HU, ID, IL, IN, IS, JP, KE, KG, KP, KR, KZ, LC, LK, LR, LS, LT, LU, LV, MD, MG, MK, MN, MW, MX, NO, NZ, PL, PT, RO, RU, SD, SE, SG, SI, SK, SL, TJ, TM, TR, TT, UA, UG, UZ, VN, YU, ZA, ZW.
- (84) Designated States (*regional*): ARIPO patent (GH, GM, KE, LS, MW, MZ, SD, SL, SZ, TZ, UG, ZW), Eurasian patent (AM, AZ, BY, KG, KZ, MD, RU, TJ, TM), European patent (AT, BE, CH, CY, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GB, GR, IE, IT, LU, MC, NL, PT, SE, TR), OAPI patent (BF, BJ, CF, CG, CI, CM, GA, GN, GW, ML, MR, NE, SN, TD, TG).
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- Published:
— with international search report
- (88) Date of publication of the international search report:
10 January 2002

[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: AN OPTICAL SWITCH HAVING A PLANAR WAVEGUIDE AND A SHUTTER ACTUATOR



(57) Abstract: An optical switch having an input waveguide and two output waveguides separated by and disposed around a trench. The input waveguide and a first output waveguide have respective optical paths defined by their respective cores; those optical paths (and cores) being coaxial with each other. Those waveguides are also separated by a trench having a medium provided therein that has a refractive index different from that of the waveguides. The input waveguide and first output waveguide are separated by a distance defined by the trench and that is insufficient to affect the transmission characteristics of an optical signal propagating from the input waveguide to the first output waveguide, even though the optical signal experiences different refractive indices as it propagates across the trench from the input waveguide to the first output waveguide. The input waveguide and a second output waveguide are arranged generally on the same side of the trench such that an optical signal passing from the input waveguide to the second output waveguide does not completely traverse the trench. Thus, even though an optical signal passing from the input waveguide to either of the first or second output waveguide encounters different refractive indices, the distance over which the optical signal must travel between the waveguides is small enough so as to not affect the optical transmission characteristics of that signal.

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For two-letter codes and other abbreviations, refer to the "Guidance Notes on Codes and Abbreviations" appearing at the beginning of each regular issue of the PCT Gazette.

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Int. Application No

PCT/US 00/32366

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

IPC 7 G02B26/08

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 G02B

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

EPO-Internal, PAJ

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	EP 0 935 149 A (HEWLETT PACKARD CO) 11 August 1999 (1999-08-11) column 6, line 25 - line 35 column 11, line 58 - column 12, line 19 -----	1,4,7,9, 12,14, 21,22
E	US 6 195 478 B1 (FOUQUET JULIE E) 27 February 2001 (2001-02-27) abstract ----- -/--	1,21,22

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

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Y document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art.

G document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search

20 April 2001

Date of mailing of the international search report

15/06/2001

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Int. Patent Application No
PCT/US 00/32366

C.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
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A	<p>EP 0 813 088 A (HEWLETT PACKARD CO) 17 December 1997 (1997-12-17) abstract column 21, line 34 - line 54</p>	1,8
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Information on patent family members

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